

NSC Briefing

4 October 1954

SOVIET SUPPORT FOR CHINESE COMMUNISTS

I. Public Soviet support for Peiping reached a new high during last week's celebrations of fifth anniversary Chinese Communist regime.

A. Soviet delegation to Peiping included three of nine Presidium members, led by number two man, Khrushchev, also present--Bulgaria, Mikoyan--highest-ranking group known to have gone outside USSR since 1947.

B. Parallel ceremonies in Moscow attended by remaining six Presidium members-- toasted Sino-Soviet friendship, denounced US "aggressive acts" against China.

II. Most important Soviet pronouncement was Khrushchev's Peiping speech. He:

A. Reaffirmed strength of Sino-Soviet friendship made clear high value Moscow places on alliance. Cited Sino-Soviet treaty (1950) as clear-cut demonstration

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this friendship.

- B. Gave heavy play to current Soviet "peaceful co-existence" theme, but warned "if imperialists dare to unleash war against us, imperialism is doomed to fatal destruction."
- C. Khrushchev further gave full endorsement to Chou En-lai's earlier call for a collective security arrangement in Asia, citing his five principles as the model for Asian and world relations.
- D. Pinpointed Formosa, stating US is "trying by every possible means" prevent Chinese Communists from "liberating" Formosa, is turning island into "military base for invading Chinese mainland..."
- E. Said "Soviet people" sympathize with Chinese Communist desire to take Formosa, "support Chinese people in their determination to liberate their suffering brothers." He concluded that "Formosa can certainly

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be liberated."

III. This is first time any top-level Soviet leader has publicly pledged "support" of Soviet "people" to this Chinese Communist goal.

A. Over past two months, USSR has treated Formosa cautiously.

B. Moscow has made little independent comment,--relied instead on Peiping's statements, played Formosa campaign as "will" of Chinese people.

IV. Chinese Communist speakers at ceremonies played up friendship theme. Chou En-lai cited formal bond of Sino-Soviet Treaty, made clear that Peiping is an enthusiastic ally of USSR.

A. On Formosa, Chou, like Krushchev, observed that US is still "attempting obstruct Chinese people from liberating Formosa;" similarly concluded that Peiping "will certainly liberate Formosa."

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B. Gen. Peng Teh-huai, former commander in Korea, and newly-named Minister of Defense stated "struggle to liberate Formosa... is still unfinished task of Chinese people's war of liberation... ."

C. Peng called upon army to "redouble our efforts, so that we shall assuredly free Formosa from yoke of American imperialists."

V. Neither Soviet nor Chinese pronouncements are as immediately ominous as they appear.

A. Khrushchev's speech ignored critical questions of (1) timing of any Formosa operation, and (2) kind and degree of Soviet support to be given.

B. Moreover, Khrushchev's citation of Sino-Soviet treaty was not in context of remarks on Formosa.

C. Chou, following Chinese Communist practice since 1950, also avoided setting deadline for "liberation" of Formosa.

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- D. Gen. Peng's "order of day" to army did not order army on the alert to invade Formosa. Peng instead ordered army to be "constantly prepared for combat," and specified Formosa as one objective. Did not directly relate the two.
- E. Since Formosa propaganda campaign began (July 54), Peiping's top-level spokesmen have been careful to note further preparations necessary before operation can be undertaken, a fact often missed in press accounts of Peiping's menacing statements.
- F. Further negative consideration is that Moscow's recent policies toward Far East have been geared to higher priority aims in Europe. "Liberation" of Formosa at this time would be inimical to those aims.
- G. None of these negative considerations necessarily applies, however, to the offshore islands (X)

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VI. No evidence that Chinese Communists now pressing Moscow for support of Formosa operation. Might be different by next spring (April to October best for invasion attempt).

A. Chinese Communist ground and air forces are now and will doubtless remain far superior to equivalent Nationalist forces, but USSR could bolster Chinese Communist naval strength, which is negligible.

B. Ambassador Bohlen in Moscow believes that USSR does not wish to risk involvement in a major war over issue of Formosa.

C. However, Moscow and Peiping might believe such risk worth taking at such time as they succeed in isolating the United States in its support of Nationalist China. Could calculate that US will back down if its other interests are threatened.)

D. In the meantime, steady Communist propaganda pressure

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on Formosa, can be expected, aimed at damaging US relations with our allies and the Asian "neutrals," and also at discouraging Nationalist officials and troops.

- (c) #. During this period, Chinese Communist may also take direct military action against major Nationalist-held offshore islands and even make air attacks on Formosa, as part of a softening-up campaign for an eventual assault on Formosa.